ECODESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: DEPLOYMENT OF A WEB TOOL: OPERA™

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In 2010, BIO IS and SOPREMA initiated a partnership for the development of OPERA™, a web-based LCA software tool, efficiently supporting ecodesign and environmental communication.

BIO Intelligence Service:
- Consultancy specialised in environmental impact assessment since 1989
- With more than 10 years of experience in the development of Life Cycle Assessment tools, BIO IS is convinced of the need for companies (especially small and medium companies) to have scientifically robust, intuitive and flexible environmental assessment solutions.

SOPREMA:
- World leader in waterproofing solutions
- SOPREMA has started an ecodesign strategy with the aim of reducing the environmental impacts of its products but also decreasing its oil dependency.
- The need for SOPREMA to base its ecodesign and communication strategy on scientifically sound figures.

OPERA™: flexibility and simplicity

An LCA tool specifically designed to meet businesses’ needs
- Enables a close collaboration between LCA experts and product experts thanks to different user profiles
- Offers a high level of flexibility to suit all kinds of products and business organisations as you can configure your own products and supply chain
- Ensures the compatibility with LCA rules and methodologies

A step-by-step approach
- Step 1: Setting up of the methodological framework (sets of environmental indicators and other rules for LCA) - Performed by BIO IS or expert users in the company
- Step 2: Setting up the product tree – Performed either by the user if he has a sufficient LCA knowledge (“expert user” profile) or by BIO IS
- Step 3: Entering the values for the different key parameters via an intuitive questionnaire – Performed by the user
- Step 4: Analysing instantaneously the environmental hotspots, creating new scenarios and comparing them, creating Environmental Product Declaration – Performed by the user (and supported by BIO IS if needed)

A practical application in SOPREMA’s projects
SOPREMA uses OPERA™ as:
- An ecodesign tool. For instance, this is done in the context of the Mutatio project in which SOPREMA is deeply involved. In this case, OPERA™ offers a real decision support.
- A communication tool: it can edit the communication documents, either in the form of usual graphs or “Environmental Product Declarations” (EPD) such as FDES in agreement with NF P 01-010 standard.

OPERA™ benefits from the feedback of a thorough pilot
- OPERA™ was first deployed for SOPREMA: it helped testing and adapting the tool for environmental assessment, ecodesign, and communication.
- OPERA™ is now an innovative solution on the market of LCA software tools as it offers a simple and effective solution for companies seeking reliable environmental information.
- It allows businesses to instantly obtain their product’s environmental impacts in the most effective way.
- OPERA™ can also be adapted to different levels of expertise: from first-start users to expert users.
- It is the first LCA tool allowing to create a real dialogue between LCA experts and businesses.